UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Current State of Ethics Training in Canadian Professional Psychology Graduate Programs

by

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A thesis submitted to

the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education

In

Counselling Psychology

Department of Educational Psychology

Edmonton, Alberta

Spring, 2007

Library and Archives Canada

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395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-29904-3
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-29904-3

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ABSTRACT

Little is known about how psychology ethics are presently being taught to graduate students in Canada and the only study to date was conducted by Pettifor and Pitcher in 1982. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the present state of ethics education in Canadian university-based clinical, counselling and school psychology training programs. Thirty-nine programs were reviewed for ethics course requirements and a content analysis was conducted on 29 course syllabi. Data were gathered regarding course availability, program requirements, course objectives, instructional format, evaluation methods and topic areas. In addition, a list of commonly required or recommended textbooks is compiled and a sample course outline for psychology ethics courses is proposed for instructors. Limitations and future directions for research are also discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to convey my appreciation to Dr. Derek Truscott, my thesis supervisor, for his time, support, and encouragement in the development and achievement of this work. I would also like to acknowledge my other committee members, Dr. Dick Sobsey and Dr. Sherrill Conroy for their suggestions and participation.

I thank Rachel, Aspen and Christine for all their moral support through this process as well as the many other counselling students who offered unlimited advice, support, and reassurance over the past two years.

Finally, I thank my parents, Mitsi and Soren Gothjelpsen, and also Kurt, who continually offer every type of support possible and who always fill my life with love.

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KEYS TO SYMBOLS, ABBREVIATIONS OR NOMENCLATURE

ABBREVIATION

1. APA = American Psychological Association
2. CPA = Canadian Psychological Association
3. CCOEP = Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists

Chapter One: Introduction

The purpose of a professional code of ethics for a mental health profession, such as psychology, is to define basic principles that delineate appropriate therapeutic practice, to describe therapists' responsibilities to clients, and to provide a degree of assurance that therapists will abide by the rules and expectations of society (Huber, 1994). The Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) and American Psychological Association (APA) both require instruction in scientific and professional ethics and standards in order to obtain program accreditation; and the Mutual Recognition Agreement of the Regulatory Bodies for Professional Psychologists in Canada (2001) declares that core competencies of professional psychologists include ethics and standards. Specifically, psychologists are required to have "knowledge of ethical principles; standards of professional conduct; responsibilities to clients, society, the profession, and colleagues; awareness of potentially conflicting principles; standards for psychological tests and measurements; standards for conducting psychological research; jurisprudence and local knowledge" as well as skills in ethical decision-making (Mutual Recognition Agreement, 2001, p.11).

Bersoff (2003) states that ethical behaviour is the integration of didactic knowledge; familiarity with respective codes of ethics; an understanding of an ethical decision-making process; a clear understanding of the philosophical principles on which their code is based; and personal characteristics that lead to wise and prudent decision-making. So how is it that professionals are taught to be ethical? Students who seek professional training in psychology need to be provided with some kind of framework for recognizing, evaluating and deciding upon reasonable solutions for ethical dilemmas they

encounter (Bersoff, 2003). Indeed, as Vasquez (1992) argues, many professionals concerned with the issues of unethical behaviour believe that education of trainees may be the most powerful weapon against professional misconduct.

Social, political and legal concerns over the past sixty years have led to an upsurge of interest in ethics in the practice of psychology. In response to pressures from the consumers of psychological services as well as concerns raised by psychologists themselves, there has been a steady increase in the number of research publications oriented toward psychology ethics. However, there has also been a decidedly fewer number of publications that attend to ethical training.

Statement of the Problem

The profession of psychology is entrusted with the responsibly to ensure competent and ethical practice on the part of its members. Handelsman (1986) questions whether it is "ethical to train people to do a variety of skills without also training them to perform those skills in an ethical manner" (p.371). Research over the past fifty years has found a steady increase in exposure to ethics in applied psychology programs and there have been a number of studies which have argued that there is a serious need for ethics education (Pelsma & Borgers, 1986; Talbutt, 1981; Tymchuck et al., 1982; Welfel & Lipsitz, 1983; Pettifor & Pitcher, 1982). There is a need for recent descriptive knowledge of ethics training, particularly in terms of what is covered and how it is delivered in Canada.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to examine the present state of ethics education in Canadian university-based clinical, counselling psychology and school psychology training programs. Probably the most comprehensive examination of ethics training in clinical and counselling programs to date was conducted by Vanek (1990). While this study included nine Canadian APA-accredited programs in the data, findings that were specific to Canada were not provided. Indeed, the only study to date that has explored ethics training in Canadian psychology graduate programs was conducted by Pettifor and Pitcher in 1982. Therefore, little is known as to how psychology ethics are presently being taught to graduate students in Canada. Consequently, the present study seeks to fill some of the gap in that knowledge. Department program descriptions and course syllabi were gathered in order to glean some understanding as to how graduate students learn about ethical problems in psychology.

An additional purpose of the present study is to provide feedback to ethics course instructors so that they may gain some knowledge around how others have approached the teaching of ethics and perhaps provide them with new ideas around how they may wish to proceed with instruction.

Thirty-nine online catalogues were reviewed for the clinical, counselling psychology and school psychology programs in universities across Canada as identified by the CPA Graduate Guide. I sought to review all Canadian university psychology graduate programs offering applied psychology degrees in order to get a snapshot of professional ethics training. It is important to note that not all school psychology programs are included in this study. Many school psychology programs do not provide

training that would allow graduates to register/charter as psychologists or psychological associates, and were therefore excluded. Only those clinical, counselling psychology and school psychology programs that were designed to allow students to become psychologists were included.

Research Questions

One fundamental research question is addressed through this study:

What is the current state of ethics education in Canadian university-based clinical, counselling and school psychology programs?

Seven subsidiary questions are used to elucidate the primary research question:

1. Are separate formal courses in ethics available to students in the identified psychology graduate programs?
2. Are these ethics courses required or are they optional?
3. What are the course goals or objectives?
4. What is the course format?
5. How are course objectives assessed?
6. What ethical issues or topics are being covered in these courses?
7. What are the required or suggested texts?

To examine the present state of ethics education, descriptive information on all eight of the research objectives is presented. It is important to note that this study is intended to be preliminary and the purpose is exploratory and descriptive in terms of the ways in which ethics education is delivered, and is not meant to evaluate the efficacy or quality of such programs.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

An Increasing Focus on Ethics

Over the past few decades there has been an increased emphasis on ethical as well as professional and scientific accountability. Literature relating to professional ethical issues was largely absent until after World War II, with the discovery of the atrocities performed in the name of science and the subsequent development of the Nuremburg Code of Ethics in Medical Research in 1964 (Sinclair, Simon & Pettifor, 1993). Research around psychology ethics then grew steadily in the 1970's and 1980's as formal complaints and litigation in American courts increased. The enactment of community mental health legislation in the sixties, the advent of third-party reimbursement as well as mounting evidence of grossly unethical behaviour committed by psychologist both in universities and in practice, led to a sharp increase in focus on professional accountability (Welfel & Lipsitz, 1984; Welfel & Strohm-Kitchener, 1992; Sinclair, Simon & Pettifor, 1993; Sinclair, 1993). Furthermore, interest in ethics was amplified by the growing number of research publications relating to moral behaviour (e.g. Rest, 1984; Kitchener, 1984). Another catalyst for increased interest in ethics came from the growth in new and untested counselling and research techniques. As Tymchuck (1986) argued, it appeared that the impetus to try out these new technologies outweighed the commitment to use these novel treatments in an ethical manner. Increased use of these new treatments led to a rising concern for consumer rights (Goodyear & Sinnett, 1984; Welfel & Lipsitz,, 1984).

In the 1970's, Canadian psychologists were also voicing concerns about the direction psychology ethics seemed to be taking. The CPA had routinely adopted the

revisions of the APA code of ethics since 1959 until the 1977 revision, when CPA members began to show serious discontent (Sinclair, Simon & Pettifor, 1993). Concerns grew around new American antitrust laws for professional activities (Overcast, Sales, & Poland, 1982), and the APA's subsequent removal of certain restrictions around advertising for psychological services. With these changes, Canadian psychologists felt uneasy about the risks around changing the nature of the professional relationship, and they feared that protection of the public from unscrupulous commercial pursuits would become more difficult (Sinclair, Simon & Pettifor, 1993). The discontent of Canadian psychologists led to the development of a Made-in-Canada ethics code and in 1986, the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists was formally adopted by the CPA Board of Directors.

Overall, publications on the ethical dimensions of research and applied psychology have increased in the past few decades, by contrast however, the ethical dimensions of education has received only minimal attention, (Welfel & Strohm-Kitchener, 1992) and this is particularly apparent in terms of Canadian data.

The Teaching of Professional Ethics to Psychologists

The incorporation of ethics training in psychology graduate programs coincided with the growth of clinical psychology. The first specific courses in professional psychology ethics were introduced in 1947 (DePalma & Drake, 1956). Since then a number of common themes have been noted in literature. There has been an increasing trend towards inclusion of ethics in the curriculum; an increase in ethics as a requirement; concern around whether or not ethics training translates to ethical behaviour after graduation; an increased focus on discussing students' individual values and how those

values impact applied practice; as well as a gradual shift from training in ethics through informal methods to formal methods.

The first published survey of psychology ethics education in graduate programs was conducted by DePalma and Drake in 1956, as they queried the status of ethics training in 125 psychology graduate schools. They sent questionnaires to 143 schools that offered graduate studies in psychology and obtained a 74% return rate. DePalma and Drake (1956) found that 9.6% of schools offered a separate course in ethics and that only 6% of graduate programs required an ethics course. Thirty-four percent offered ethics either as an elective or included within some other larger unit of study. In other words, DePalma and Drake (1956) found that 60% of programs provided little or no training in professional ethics. This finding reflected a common sentiment and Aristotelian view at the time, that ethical behaviour was largely based upon solid moral character, which would have been automatically selected when a student was accepted into a graduate program. How a program would manage to select only individuals with solid moral character was not explicated. Furthermore, the most common opinion was that a separate course dealing with professional ethics was not warranted. Many respondents indicated that they believed ethics were best learned through practical work, colloquium, psychotherapy and supervision, and that they "would expect psychologists to be familiar with the APA code of ethics [but that] at the graduate level, this does not justify a course" (p.556). This appears to represent an assumption that one can fully understand a code of ethics through self-education and that knowing ones professional code of ethics would provide some guarantee that ethical behaviour will follow naturally.

The next survey of ethics education was conducted by Jorgensen and Weigel in 1973. Since the DePalma and Drake (1956) study seven years earlier, a dramatic shift in attitudes towards ethics education and inclusion of ethics in the curricula was beginning to be apparent. Jorgensen and Weigel (1973) surveyed 106 APA approved programs and asked doctoral training directors about their perceptions of graduate training practices. The authors reported that 14% of clinical programs required ethics courses and that discussion of professional ethics, either informally or through larger units of study, was included in 80% of their sample. While there had been a substantial increase in graduate training in ethics, the form in which this took place still appeared to be mostly informal or as part of a discussion in other courses.

In 1979, Tymchuk et al. attempted to determine the extent to which APA-approved programs offered ethics education. A questionnaire was sent to the chairpersons of all APA approved training programs in clinical psychology and a 56% return rate was attained. Fifty-five percent of clinical psychology programs reported formal courses in ethics and 41% included ethics as a planned and/or informal topic within other courses. Moreover, in schools where formal courses were offered, 81% required an ethics course as part of their degree program. In other words, 96% of clinical programs in their sample reported covering ethics; however, only 67% of these treated ethics formally, either as a separate course or as a planned unit within other courses. Topics that were covered, in descending order of frequency were: research standards, confidentiality, right to treatment, other concerns of clinical practice (e.g. fees, assessment), legal issues, the *Casebook on Ethical Standards of Psychologists* (APA, 1967), human rights, the philosophy of ethics, controversial treatment methods (e.g. encounter groups), ethics of

other professions, and personal values. Since, 1979, every graduate program seeking APA accreditation has been required to offer training in ethics and to familiarize students with the most recent versions of the APA ethics code (Bersoff, 2003).

Six years later, Tymchuck (1985), surveyed 155 APA student members regarding their training in ethics and found that while 92% of the students received clinical training, only 55% indicated that their department offered a course in ethics. Moreover, 80% of the students stated that they felt they lacked adequate training in psychology ethics.

As noted in earlier studies, there was a widespread belief that separate courses in psychology were unnecessary and that ethics could best be taught to novice psychologists through informal methods such as in the context of supervised clinical work. Handelsman (1986) has referred to this implicit educational approach as learning ethics by "osmosis" and argues that relying on the assumption that ethical behaviour will be learned through the gradual seeping through of ethics information during discussions of cases is a dangerous practice. Handelsman (1986) outlines several shortcomings of this approach, specifically that this approach assumes that (a) adequate supervision will always be provided, (b) supervisors will be competent in ethics, and (c) supervisors will not hesitate to point out ethical transgressions, even if good relations with trainees are affected. He also points out that there is no guarantee that a variety of ethical issues will arise. Handelsman (1986) states that "the question of fitting ethics courses into tight schedule itself raises issues of values and ethics, as well as of the nature of training in psychology" (p. 371). By 1988, Fine and Ulrich (1987)declared that they regard "the teaching of graduate-level courses in ethics to be a critical and necessary component of graduate training in psychology" (p.542). However, while several key studies point to the

importance of including a separate course in the curriculum (Handelsman, 1985; Pettifor & Pitcher, 1982; Tymchuk et al., 1979; Fine & Ulrich, 1987), there were no empirical data available that directly supported the conclusion that a separate course in ethics was preferable to more informal methods. This was until 1992 when Gawthrop and Uhlemann found that when students who were preparing for careers in the mental health field were given a 3-hour workshop on ethical decision-making, they scored significantly better on a rating scale designed to measure the quality of the decision making process. The authors concluded that formal training in ethics has a significant positive effect, even when the instruction was only for 3 hours.

In 1990, Vanek conducted one of the most comprehensive studies to date of ethics training with a survey of 209 APA-approved clinical and counselling programs in the United States and Canada. All of the programs reported that ethics were included in the graduate curriculum and 69% had a separate required course. Only 4% of the programs offered ethics courses as an elective option. Moreover, almost all of the programs that responded reported additional coverage of ethics in other parts of the curriculum. In terms of where ethics training should take place, most (82.8%) felt that graduate programs were primarily responsible (Vanek, 1990) and 13.3% felt that the responsibility should be shared between graduate programs and internship supervisors. Thus, there was a considerable change in attitude from departments in terms of holding graduate programs responsible for ethics training. Wilson and Ranft (1993) examined how students felt about their ethics education. They surveyed counselling psychology doctoral students in APA-accredited counselling programs as to the extent of their exposure to ethics education as well as their perception of readiness to handle ethical dilemmas in applied

work. The authors found that 94% of students reported having been required to take a course in ethics and that most students felt prepared for both legal and ethical issues in their professional work. Thus, between 1956 and 1990, formalized ethics education in separate courses had increased from 6% to 69% and the number of programs offering any (formal or informal) instruction in ethics rose from 40% to 100%.

Ethics Training in Canada

In Canada, the history of ethics training is less clear. While Vanek's (1990) review included seven APA-approved clinical and counselling programs in Canada, her study does not provide specific information regarding ethics training within Canada. In the only Canadian study to date, Pettifor and Pitcher (1982) surveyed 27 psychology graduate departments in order examine the nature of ethics training in clinical and non-clinical psychology graduate programs. This study was conducted in 1982, four years before the CPA officially adopted the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists (CCOEP). At that time, it was unclear as to what extent graduate students were trained in acceptable ethical practices and in ethical decision-making. Moreover, there was a considerable lack of consensus regarding whether or not ethics should be taught, and if so, how it should be taught (Pettifor & Pritcher, 1982). Pettifor and Pitcher (1982) examined six issues: 1) to what extent programs were committed to clinical training, 2) to what extent graduates were employed in applied settings, 3) whether or not ethics training was offered in graduate programs, 4) the extent and format of ethics training, 5) ethical issues being taught, and finally, 6) how it is that ethics should be taught. The analyses were based upon information from surveys gathered from 27 psychology departments (73% return rate). They found that clinical students were more likely than non-clinical student to

receive ethics training. However, Pettifor and Pritcher (1982) point out that the quality of that training is suspect, as training approaches appeared to be variable and minimal. Fifty-six percent of graduate programs offered a formal course on ethics, 29% relied on informal methods such as clinical supervision and practical learning, and 15% of programs did not teach ethics because they did not believe it was necessary. Moreover, of the 56% of programs that did offer a formal course in ethics, only two (7.4%) were required.

Courses were generally one semester in length, with classes meeting once per week for two to three hours. Method of instruction was generally lecture and discussion. In terms of the ethical content areas addressed, the most frequently reported topics were: research, professional standards, competency and confidentiality. The least attention was paid to special populations, fees and advertising. Some departments reported other topics such as professionalization and Americanization through "standards" documents, and the ethics of political and social advocacy. Pettifor and Pitcher (1982) found very few programs that addressed moral values and decision-making strategies in the absence of guidelines.

In terms of the Departments' commitment to teaching ethics, 96% believed that ethics can be taught; however, only 63% believed that formal courses should be offered, and only 59% believed that courses in ethics should be mandatory. In other words, 41% of programs reported that they believed ethics courses should be optional, non-existent or did not provide data. Methodological limitations of this study included the self-report data which may be subject to bias and that reporting on the content of ethics courses may be highly subjective and subject to halo effects, particularly where the format is informal

(Pettifor & Pitcher, 1982). Pettifor and Pitcher (1982) concluded that since the majority of students obtain clinical employment following graduation, the low rate of ethics training is cause for concern when considering the protection of the public. The authors then recommended that graduate schools increase their commitment to ethics training and develop effective instructional models.

In summary, over the past 50 years the profession of psychology has seen increased emphasis on ethics education in psychology training programs, as the profession endeavours to respond to growing concerns for human-rights and in our increasingly litigious society. There has been an increasing trend to include required formal coursework in ethics. Between 1956 and 1990, formalized ethics education in separate courses had increased from 6% to 69% and the number of programs offering any (formal or informal) instruction in ethics rose from 40% to 100%. Little is known about the current state of ethics training, particularly in Canadian graduate programs. Because Pettifor and Pitcher's (1982) study was conducted four years prior to the establishment of the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists and because their study is sole review of ethics education in Canada to date, the present study seeks to fill some of the gap in our knowledge as to the current state of ethics training in Canada.

Chapter Three: Method

The number of ethics educational experiences available in psychology graduate programs in North America generally has been increasing, however, there is scant information describing these experiences within Canada. The purpose of this study is to determine the present state of ethics education in Canadian applied psychology training programs. The main research question was: What is the current state of ethics education in Canadian university-based clinical, counselling and school psychology programs? And the following seven subsidiary questions were used to elucidate the main research question: (1) Are separate formal courses in ethics available to students in the identified psychology graduate programs? (2) Are these ethics courses required or are they optional? (3) What are the course goals or objectives? (4) What is the course format? (5) How are course objectives assessed? (6) What ethical issues or topics are being covered in these courses? And finally, (7) what are the required or suggested textbooks?

An internet survey research design reviewing publicly available documents was used to identify program demographic information and a modified content analysis was used to describe syllabi data quantitatively.

Procedure

Programs were identified through the *Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) Graduate Guide 2004-2005* (available online: http://www.cpa.ca/graduate/grad1.html) that offer counselling, clinical and school psychology graduate degrees intended to allow students to register/charter with their provincial colleges. The *Graduate Guide* contains descriptions of psychology graduate programs, however, it is noted that while it endeavours to be a comprehensive listing of all psychology graduate programs in Canada,

the guide is voluntary and not every program is necessarily included. The CPA website also includes a list of Canadian universities offering training in psychology. Therefore, a review of all psychology programs listed on the CPA website was done in order to identify programs that may not have been included in the Graduate Guide.

Within each graduate program website a search was conducted for any courses that indicated instruction in ethics. Course titles and course descriptions were searched for words such as 'ethics' and 'professional issues'. Ethics courses were classified as such only when they were discrete, whole units of study and were labelled as such. It is possible that in some programs psychology ethics are covered within other courses. However, only courses that mentioned ethics in the title or course description were included. In fact, all courses that mentioned ethics in the course descriptions were also titled as ethics courses. In addition, only courses covering professional ethics were reviewed for this study; courses on research ethics were excluded. Program websites were searched for information regarding whether the ethics course was required as part of the degree program.

All courses identified as separate instructional units of ethics study were reviewed in detail. Specifically: course goals/objectives; format of instruction; methods of evaluation; topics of instruction; and finally textbook selections were all investigated. To do so, course outlines/syllabi were sought. Several course outlines were available online through individual department websites. However, for those courses where outlines were not publicly available, email requests were sent to departments and/or course instructors for copies of the latest version of the course syllabus. A reminder/re-request email was sent 3-4 weeks later for those departments/instructors that did not respond.

Program and course descriptions were found through program websites and online university catalogues in order to obtain characteristics of graduate ethics training in psychology. The most recent versions of university catalogues were used and all were from 2005-2006. Obtaining data from online sources has three advantages: (a) it is time and cost efficient, (b) course descriptions and program information were available for all of the programs, and (c) the method did not rely on respondent's memory or interpretation. This methodology also has limitations: (a) course titles may be deceptive whereby there may be instances where a course covers ethical issues, but does not mention this in the course title or course description, (b) information on program websites may be inaccurate or incomplete, and (c) we do not know how often listed courses are offered.

All but one of the syllabi were the most recent versions (i.e., 2005-2006), with the exception of one syllabus that was from 2003.

Reliability

In the content analysis literature, this method has been defined in several ways: with content as *inherent*, a *property of the source of a text*, and as *emerging in the process of a researcher analyzing the text* (Krippendorff, 2003). Our approach more closely follows Berlson's (1952) original definition that content analysis is "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (p. 18). His definition requires that a content analysis be replicable (i.e. reliable) and valid. I looked at the "manifest" content in the syllabi as there was not much need for "reading between the lines". Thus, replicabiltiy of the present study is aided by the fact that many of the terms or phrases used to describe

topics taught in ethics courses were generally straightforward. There may be some level of researcher interpretation as to which subcategories are grouped together (for example, confidentiality, privacy and record-keeping were placed into one group); however, obtaining a count of how many courses covered each topic was more clear-cut.

Validity

Course and program information was obtained for all of the programs listed on the CPA website and in the CPA graduate guide. Also, 29 syllabi were obtained from the 39 courses in the identified programs. In order for the data source to be valid, the information contained on the program website and in the course syllabi would have to be complete and accurate. It is unknown whether or not students receive the same instruction as is outlined in their course syllabi. However, for many universities a course syllabus represents a kind of contract between the instructor, university and students, which delineates the nature and procedures of the course. In many ways a syllabus is a form of "informed consent" for students, which is in and of itself an ethical issue. Therefore, it is believed that course syllabi are a reliable and reasonable document source for this study. If surveys had been administered to individual professors requesting information on course content and methods, reliability and validity may have suffered due to inaccuracies in respondents' memory or interpretation, self-report biases and halo effects.

In terms of the present research goals, analyzing program websites and course catalogues is a reliable way of determining if ethics courses are available and if they are required. Moreover, analyzing syllabi is a direct approach to finding out how ethics are taught, what is covered, how is competence being assessed, and which text materials are used.

Delimitations

The study was delimited the sample to only the English speaking applied professional psychology programs (clinical, counselling and school). This was done because clinical, counselling psychology and some school psychology programs are designed with the intention of training applied psychologists who are faced with ethical situations most directly related to the CCOEP, as opposed to the more research/experimental psychologists who face more research/academic ethical situations, some of which are better addressed through documents such as the Tri-Council Research Policy Statement on Research with Human Subjects (1998). Moreover, the sample was delimited to programs intended and designed to allow students to register with their provincial/territorial colleges. Therefore, professional counselling or school psychology degrees that offer training in counselling psychology but do not provide all of the requirements for registering were excluded. Also, programs offering degrees in specialized areas such as pastoral, addictions, and genetic counselling were not included.

The review was limited to Canadian university programs, leaving out any foreign based distance learning programs (e.g. Gonzaga, Loma Linda, and City University in Alberta). One distance learning program was included in the review as it is a joint initiative between three Canadian universities (Campus Alberta).

Analysis of Data

The methodology in the present study may be conceptualized as a basic form of content analysis research methodology: the identification and description of content themes. Content Analysis is a systematic reading of a body of text, images or symbolic material as a way to understand the inner structure of the content (Krippendorff, 2003).

Unlike many qualitative content analysis approaches that analyze a discourse, message or document for varying themes, ideas, emotions, opinions, and so forth, which often require greater use of interpretation, the present study had more straightforward and concrete data. Most qualitative analyses consist of sophisticated counting approaches in which the frequency of particular words, phrases, affective expressions and the like are determined (Creswell, 2005). The qualitative aspect of content analysis (interpreting themes, opinions, ideas, affective expressions and so forth) was not necessary to meet the goals of this study and therefore was not utilized. No interpretation was needed to record textbook usage; evaluative methods; and course format and little interpretation was needed in order to determine which educational topics were being covered and the course goals/objectives. Instead, the quantitative features of content analysis (counting categorized text units) were used in order to meet the objectives of this study.

By forgoing the use of pre-set categories, the aim was to avoid the tendency to read material selectively, in support of researcher expectations. That is not to say, however, that the authors' own conceptualization of ethics topics did not influence the categorization of groups. Indeed, others may have grouped the educational topics covered in ethics courses differently. For this reason, tables that list the words and phrases used to determine category placement are included. The systematic way in which text from each syllabus was separated, grouped into what appeared to be distinct categories, and then the inclusion of explicit lists of how each group was categorized, supports the replicabiliy and therefore the reliability of this study.

Overall, the content of the course syllabi was analyzed by categorizing text data from each syllabus into groups and then the groups were identified through emergent

overarching themes. Davidson, Garton and Joyce (2003) employed a similar design in their survey of ethics education in Australian university psychology programs. They too reviewed course syllabi for analysis of, among other things, method of instruction, method of assessment and textbook usage. Rather than using a word search or word frequency approach, the text in the syllabi were read through and categorized manually because the same ideas can be expressed in different ways, using different terminology. For example, course topics like "dual relationships" and "conflicts of interest" have different phrasing but share similar meaning and could therefore be grouped together under the term "boundaries". In essence, the data were analyzed in a somewhat bottom-up approach where detailed text data were grouped into broad categories. An alternate method of analyzing the syllabi could be a more top-down approach, where one may pre-define categories (e.g. topics such as confidentiality, supervision, boundaries, etc) and then record when each syllabus includes each topic. I opted for the former method, as there is no standard approach to teaching ethics and I did not want to impose pre-defined topics and categories. I wanted to avoid "fitting" the data into my expectations of how an ethics course is taught. In other words, the themes were allowed to emerge from the data, rather than the use of specific, preset categories. Glaser (1992) uses a similar approach in his qualitative grounded theory studies that seek to explain basic processes by allowing a theory to emerge from the data. Though this study utilized the quantitative features of content analysis, it was felt that this approach (of allowing the categories to emerge from the data) would be in keeping with the overall purpose of the present study as the aim is to describe how ethics *are* being taught as opposed to delineating how ethics *should* be taught.

Text segments were extracted from each syllabus and sorted into like groups by the two researchers according to which topic area it covered (e.g., confidentiality). After all the text segments had been divided into categories, each category was then examined a second time to determine appropriateness of selections, for overlap and redundancy and then collapsed into broader categories if appropriate. The researchers discussed group placement and resolved any discrepancies. In essence, this was an inductive process of taking a large number of text segment data pieces and then narrowing them down into representative categories. When the description provided in the syllabus was insufficient to determine which topic was being covered, the researchers referred to the readings assigned for that topic in order to determine which category best represented the topic. Each topic was only recorded once for each course. In other words, if "boundaries" were mentioned at two separate occasions in one course it was only counted once. This was done to avoid inflating the count and also because the number of times a topic is mentioned in a syllabus does not necessarily indicate the depth of coverage. The same process was used to analyze course objectives/goals and methods of evaluation. The analysis of prescribed and/or recommended reading material was based only on information about required, suggested or referenced texts, and excluded periodical articles.

Chapter Four: Results

Psychology Programs Examined

Thirty-nine university-based graduate programs in counselling, clinical and school psychology were reviewed for this study. A list of these programs can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Programs Included in the Present Study

University	Program
Acadia University	Clinical
University of Alberta	Counselling
University of British Columbia	Counselling
University of British Columbia	Clinical
University of British Columbia	School Psychology
University of Calgary	Counselling
University of Calgary	Clinical
University of Calgary	School Psychology
Campus Alberta (University of Lethbridge, University of Calgary, Athabasca University)	Counselling
Concordia University	Clinical
Dalhousie University	Clinical
University of Guelph	Clinical
Lakehead University	Clinical
McGill University	Counselling
McGill University	School/Applied
McGill University	Clinical
University of Manitoba	Clinical
Memorial University of Newfoundland	School psychology
Mount Saint Vincent University	School psychology
University of New Brunswick (Fredericton)	Clinical
University of Northern British Columbia	Counselling

Table 1 Continued

Programs Included in the Present Study

University	Program
The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT)	Applied and Counselling
The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT)	Clinical Child
The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT)	School Psychology
University of Ottawa	Clinical
Queen's University	Clinical
University of Regina	Clinical
University of Saskatchewan	Counselling
University of Saskatchewan	School Psychology
University of Saskatchewan	Clinical
Simon Fraser University	Clinical
Trinity Western University	Counselling
University of Victoria	Counselling
University of Victoria	Clinical
University of Waterloo	Clinical
University of Western Ontario	Counselling
University of Western Ontario	Clinical
York University	Adult Clinical
York University	Developmental Clinical

Twenty-one (53.85%) programs were identified as "Clinical", 11 (28.21%) as "Counselling", and 7 (17.95%) as "School/Applied" Psychology. In terms of availability of formal ethics instruction, it appears that all (100.00%) of the graduate programs offered at least one separate formal course in psychology ethics. All but two of the courses were one semester in length. Of the two remaining ethics courses, one was a six

session seminar. The other was a three credit course that was extended over two semesters with a different professor for each term, and was intended to allow students to integrate the material as they became more familiar with clinical work throughout the year (personal communication, MacGregor, May 20, 2006). In four cases, a single ethics course was used for several different programs. In other words, the same ethics course was taught for two of the programs (e.g. counselling psychology and school psychology) in the same university. In these instances the course for each program was included in the data set (e.g. if the same course was used for the counselling psychology and school psychology programs it was counted twice). One program offered both a course in ethics and a course on professional issues, which included ethical issues such as child protection, standards for providing services and multiple relationships.

Description of Syllabi

Twenty-nine syllabi (74.36%) were received from the 39 programs identified. A number of the syllabi were available from program websites, however, for those not available on-line, email requests were sent to individual departments/course instructors. Ten (25.64%) department/course instructors did not reply to the email requests and syllabi were not obtained from those courses. Syllabi ranged from 2 to 10 pages in length and, as with information provided on program websites, the level of detail varied across different syllabi.

Ethics Courses as a Requirement

Thirty-Seven out of the 39 programs (94.87%) required at least a half course in graduate level ethics for their students to complete their degree programs. Two

counselling programs did not require a formal course in ethics, but did offer an ethics course as an elective option.

Course Goals/Objectives

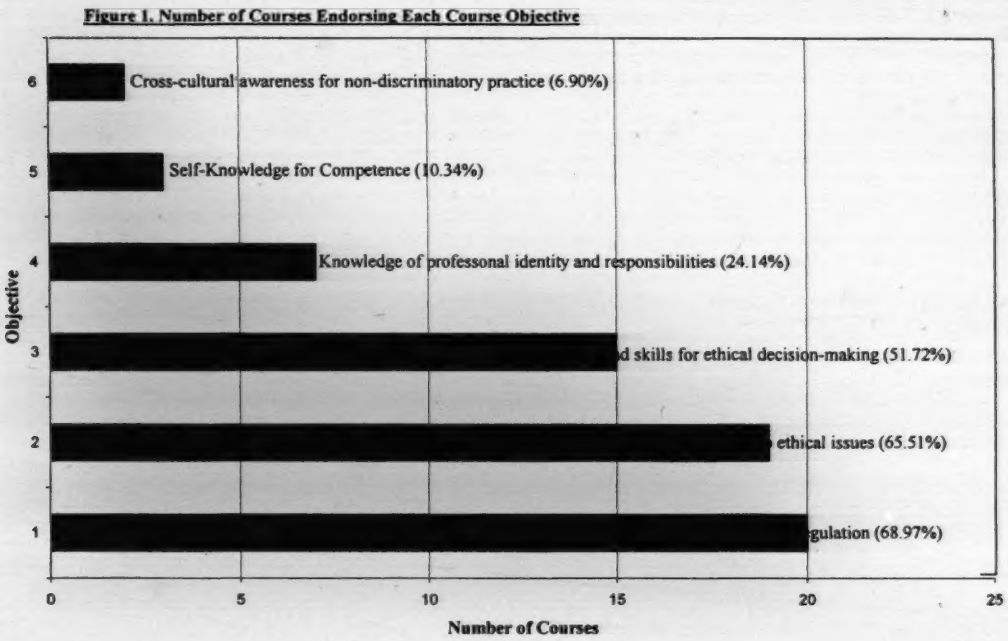
Twenty-one (72.41%) of the 29 course syllabi included course goals and/or objectives. The course objectives were grouped into 6 broad categories and were, in order of frequency: Knowledge and Understanding of Ethical Codes, Laws, Legislation, Regulation and Standards of Professional Practice; Increased Sensitivity to Ethical Issues; Development of Skills and Resources for Ethical Decision-Making; Understanding of the Professional Identity and Social Responsibilities of Psychologists; Self Knowledge of Personal Perspectives, Biases, and Personal Growth for Competent Practice; and Cross-Cultural Knowledge and Understanding for Non-Discriminatory Practice. A list of the six course objectives identified can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Course Objectives Identified in Syllabi

Knowledge & Understanding of Ethical Codes, Laws, Legislation, Regulation, and Standards of Professional Practice
Sensitivity to Ethical Issues
Provide Students with Skills and Resources for Ethical Decision-Making
Understand the Professional Identity & Social Responsibilities of Psychologists
Self Knowledge of Personal Perspectives, Biases, Personal Growth for Competent Practice
Cross-Cultural Knowledge and Understanding for Non-Discriminatory Practice

Figure 1 shows the number of courses that endorse each goal/objective as a particular aim of the course.



Tables 3 through Tables 8 (see below) lists the text segments that were sorted into each of the 6 groups.

The first objective represents the aim to help students develop knowledge and understanding of ethical codes, standards, laws of professional practice and the regulatory and collegial bodies that serve to govern the profession. Here, students are exposed to various professional codes of ethics (e.g. CPA, APA, and CCA), acts, standards and regulations governing the practice of psychology. Twenty (68.97%) of the 29 syllabi identified familiarity with codes, standards, laws and regulations as a course goal. Table 3 lists descriptions of course objectives in the understanding of codes, laws, legislation, regulation and professional standards.

Table 3

Descriptions of Course Objective

Knowledge & Understanding of Ethical Codes, Laws, Legislation, Regulation, and Standards of Professional Practice
Develop knowledge and understanding of ethical codes, legislation, and standards of professional practice relevant to psychology
Increased knowledge of ethical principles, various professional codes (i.e. CPA, APA, CCA) and models of ethical decision making in psychological practice
Become familiar with alternative codes of ethics and perspectives (e.g. APA code of ethics, feminist perspective, etc)
Become familiar with the CCOEP
To ensure familiarity with ethical codes, acts standards and regulations governing the practice of psychology
To have participants become familiar with ethical standards...by application of the CCOEP, and comparison with the Tri-Council Policy and the APA code
Understand the regulations that govern the profession of counselling
Familiarize students with the codes, standards and legislation which bear on ethical and legal issues
Knowledge of the ethical, professional and legal standards that apply to psychology
Ensure familiarity with various laws, standards and guidelines that regulate the practice of psychology and to develop ethical problem solving skills
To develop knowledge of the nature, content and purpose of professional codes of ethics
Becoming familiar with the code, its development and context, and its uses
To become familiar with the college of Psychology of Ontario and the role it plays through reading and exposure to issues raised by the Registrar of the College
To develop knowledge of professional regulation
To develop an understanding of complaints and disciplinary procedures
Increased knowledge of the rationale and procedures fro self-regulation by professional associations
Examine major issues of professional and practical concern to school psychology (e.g. training, certification and licensure, standards of practice, professional accountability, professional organizations relevant to school psychology, history of the profession)

Table 3 Continued

Descriptions of Course Objective
Knowledge & Understanding of Ethical Codes, Laws, Legislation, Regulation, and Standards of Professional Practice
To familiarize student with: ethical guidelines for practice in a variety of settings, legislation that impacts on psychological practice, the relationship between ethical and legal issues and the professional associations representing psychology in Canada
To prepare grad students who are aware of ethical and legal concerns in the contexts in which they work
Increase student awareness of...how they might approach ethical decision making in the light of various codes, standards and legislation
Knowledge of the ethical, professional and legal standards that apply to psychology
Examine central professional, ethical, and legal issues that impact on counsellors' role as helping professionals
Demonstrate a working knowledge of the appropriate ethical and legal concepts and terminology applicable to the counselling psychology profession
To introduce ethical and legal principles related to the psychological services
To familiarize students with...legislation that impacts on psychological practice
To familiarize student with the codes, standards, and legislation which bear on ethical and legal issues
To develop knowledge of the law relating to professional practice
To ensure familiarity with various laws, standards and guidelines that regulate the practice of psychology
To understand the laws that govern practice in the variety of counselling contexts
Total Number of Courses with this Objective: 20 (68.97%)

The second objective refers to sensitizing learners to ethical issues, so that they will be aware of a range of ethical issues and will be able to identify ethical dilemmas when they encounter them. This objective was often met by exposure to ethical principles, ethical philosophy, vignettes and discussion. Nineteen (65.51%) of the courses identified sensitivity to ethical issues as an objective. See Table 4.

Table 4

Descriptions of Course Objective
Sensitivity to Ethical Issues
An awareness of the range of ethical issues and expectations in psychology
To examine central professional, ethical, and legal issues that impact on counsellors' role as helping professionals
To facilitate awareness of current professional issues facing the profession
To help students learn to tolerate the ambiguity of many aspects of ethical and legal issues
To familiarize students with the ethical standards of the profession and related laws in society
To acquaint the student with various counsellor roles and the potential for the development of ethical dilemmas
Demonstrate a working knowledge of the appropriate ethical and legal concepts and terminology applicable to the counselling psychology profession
Acquire the knowledge and critical skills necessary for the evaluation of current professional practice ad counselling research from and ethical standpoint
Become familiar with possible ethical dilemmas in the practice of clinical psychology
Learn to identify ethical problems and dilemmas
Aim of this course is to familiarize students with the ethical principles that applies to psychologists working in a variety of settings
Learn to identify ethical problems and dilemmas
Become familiar with possible ethical dilemmas in the practice of clinical psychology
Increased knowledge of ethical principles
To familiarize students with the variety of issues they might encounter in their own work
To develop awareness of professional misconduct and how to prevent it
Increased awareness of ethical quandaries that can occur in certain clinical situations and awareness of the process one goes through to arrive at an ethical solution
Are aware of the ethical and legal concerns in the context I which they work
Know how to manage ethical and legal concerns appropriately and professionally
To provide learners with a knowledge base of ethics and professional issues in psychology
To introduce ethical and legal principles related to the psychological services

Table 4 Continued

Descriptions of Course Objective
Sensitivity to Ethical Issues
Increase ethical awareness in the application of psychological knowledge and principles
Promote thoughtful consideration of contemporary ethical and professional issues
Informing students on the ethical standards and obligations incumbent on practitioners who serve the role of helper
To understand the nature of ethical practice in counselling
To sensitize participants to ethical issues, so that they will be aware of ethical dilemmas when they encounter them
Give participants information about the sorts of dilemmas that arise in psychology
Total Number of Courses with this Objective: 19 (65.51%)

The third objective seeks to provide students with the skills and resources for ethical decision-making. The CPA provides a decision-making model in the preamble to the CCOEP and is comprised of ten steps that allow for a detailed and systematic manner of approaching, resolving and justifying an ethical choice and it is this model that is often used to teach decision-making [see Topics for further discussion]. This objective was often met through discussion and vignettes whereby students use the ten step model to evaluate an ethical dilemma. Fifteen (51.72%) of courses identified increased knowledge and skills in ethical decision-making as an objective. See Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptions of Course Objective
Provide Students with Skills and Resources for Ethical Decision-Making
The ability to implement the CPA ethical decision-making model to resolve ethical dilemmas
Increased skill in ethical decision making in school and counselling psychology
Learn to resolve ethical problems and dilemmas by following the CPA's ethical decision making guidelines

Table 5 Continued

Descriptions of Course Objective
Provide Students with Skills and Resources for Ethical Decision-Making
In addition to knowledge building, an important purpose of the course is to facilitate the development of skills that will allow students to anticipate and prevent ethical dilemmas, and to legally and ethically resolve difficulties that do arise in the course of professional work
To provide students with he skills and resources for ethical decision-making which bear on ethical and legal issues
To examine an ethical decision-making process and learn to apply it to typical dilemmas that occur in the practice of counselling
To develop awareness of ethical dilemmas and the process and skill of ethical decision-making
To develop ethical problem solving skills
Analyze ethical dilemmas via a decision-making model, involving moral values, ethical principles, and legal standards
Develop skills in ethical decision-making and application of ethics codes, law, legislation and practice standards to problem solving in the professional context
The class will determine what information is needed to adequately resolve various ethical dilemmas and will then use the information and the code as a decision-making framework
To have participants become familiar with decision-making strategies to resolve ethical dilemmas (CPA method)
Total Number of Courses with this Objective: 15 (51.72%)

The fourth objective addresses professional identity and the professional and social responsibilities of psychologists. Seven (24.14%) of courses identified knowledge of professional identity and responsibility as an objective. See Table 6.

Table 6

Descriptions of Course Objective
Understand the Professional Identity & Social Responsibilities of Psychologists
To develop a commitment to the professional and social responsibilities of a psychologist

Table 6 Continued

Descriptions of Course Objective
Understand the Professional Identity & Social Responsibilities of Psychologists
To understand the role that counsellors play in personal and social developments and advocacy
Inform others, including consumers of counselling services and members of other professions, of the ethical standards (with historical and philosophical background and rationale) to which helping professionals are expected to adhere
To review professional issues influencing the development of psychology and its future, particularly in Canada
To enhance the student's development of a professional identity and its associated responsibilities
Understand and discuss the diverse roles of the school psychologists in the school setting, including knowledge of the direct and indirect services that school psychologists may provide, relationship with other professions, and methods to evaluate effectiveness and effect change in their professional roles
Total Number of Courses with this Objective: 7 (24.14%)

The fifth objective is meant to increase students' self-knowledge, including an awareness of personal perspectives, values, and biases. Three (10.54%) of courses identified self-knowledge as a course objective. See Table 7.

Table 7

Descriptions of Course Objective
Self Knowledge of Personal Perspectives, Biases, and Personal Growth
To develop awareness of the relationship between personal and professional values
To increase students' openness to information and ideas that may differ from personally held views
Increased knowledge of ways to define and self-monitor competence
Total Number of Courses with this Objective: 3 (10.34%)

The sixth objective refers to cross-cultural awareness. Two (6.90%) of courses indicated cross-cultural awareness for non-discriminatory practice as an objective. See Table 8

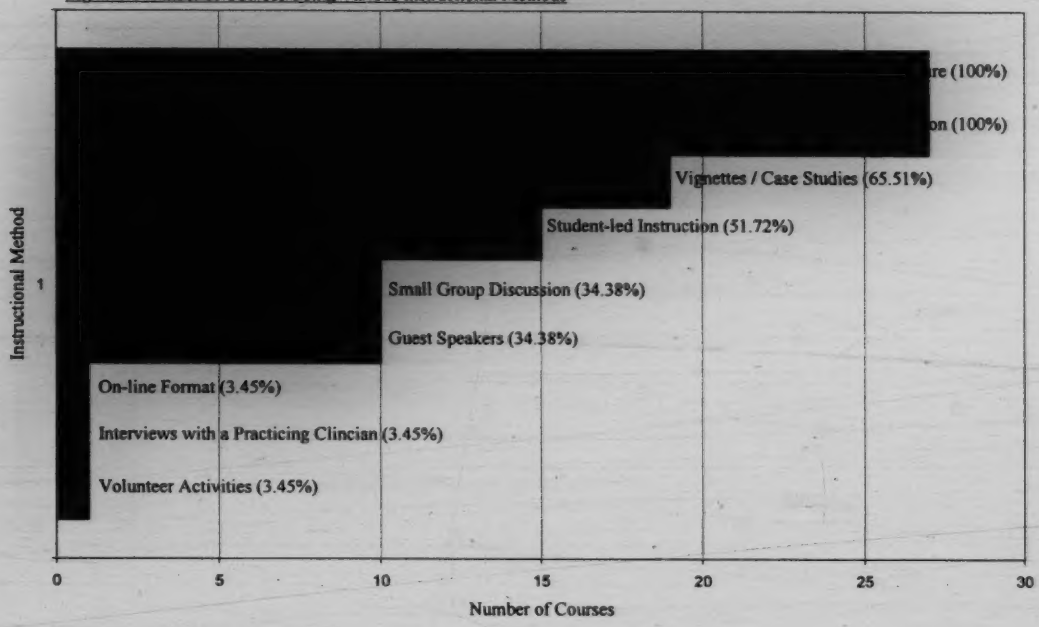
Descriptions of Course Objective
Cross-cultural awareness for non-discriminatory practice
Increased awareness and sensitivity to issues that can arise with special populations such as clients from other cultures and gay, lesbian and transgendered clients
Cross-cultural awareness for non-discriminatory practice
Integrate ethical principles, standards, and guidelines for working with clients from diverse communities, by recognizing the role of gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and the ever-changing societal expectations in a multicultural context
Total Number of Courses with this Objective: 2 (6.90%)

Course Format

Information was gathered from the syllabi regarding class format – the way in which the course was instructed. Of the 29 syllabi one course did not provide any information regarding method of instruction and one course was structured as an on-line distance learning course. Of the remaining 27 syllabi, it was found that all (100.00%) of the courses used some didactic lecturing as well as student participation in class discussion (small or large group). All (100%) courses also included some form of class discussion. Nineteen (65.51%) indicated that vignettes and/or case studies were used to highlight ethical quandaries and in ethical decision-making exercises. Fifteen (51.72%) of the courses held students partially responsible for educating the class on particular topics. This student-led instruction usually took the form of individual or small group presentations on selected topics, leading class discussions, presenting original vignettes, or summarizing articles. Ten (34.38%) courses included small group discussion. Ten (34.38%) courses brought in guest speakers to lecture and/or discuss their experiences

with ethical situations. One (3.45%) course required students to participate in volunteer activities and then to reflect upon those experiences in written assignments. One (3.45%) course had students interview a practicing clinician about their most challenging ethical dilemma. Overall, it appears that most courses combined traditional didactic teaching methods with more interactive/experiential activities whereby students are given the opportunity to discuss, debate and practice resolving ethical dilemmas. Also, it appears that students are often called upon to participate in class instruction. Figure 2 shows the number of courses that use each instructional method.

Figure 2. Number of Courses Using Various Instructional Methods



Methods of Evaluation

The review of ethics syllabi was also intended to identify the primary methods of evaluation that are used to assess competence with the instructional material. All of the 29 syllabi contained information on how students' performance would be evaluated.

Twenty-six of the courses graded students according to percentages, letter grades or grade points. Three courses were identified as evaluating students on a pass/fail scale; however, these courses still required at least one assignment which could be evaluated. Eight specific forms of evaluation (including different exam formats) were identified: Essay or Term Paper; Class Participation; Presentation; Short Written Assignment; Multiple Choice / True-False Exam; Unknown Format Exam; Short Answer/Essay Exam; and Oral Exam. Some courses also included unique assignments and that were placed in the "Idiosyncratic Methods" category. Figure 3 represents the number of courses that used the various evaluation methods.

Figure 3. Number of Courses Using the Methods of Evaluation

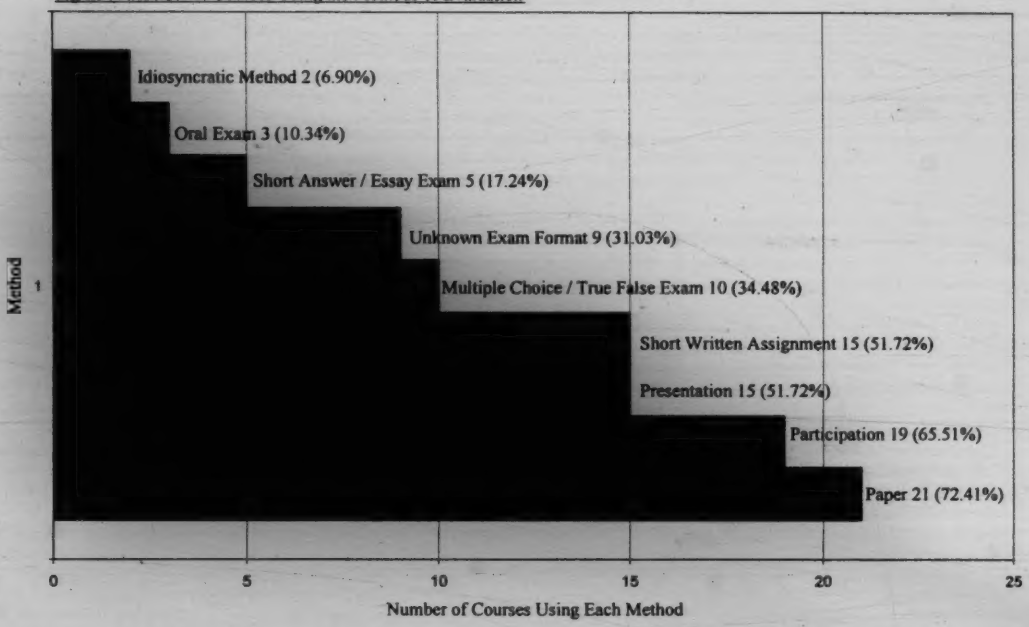
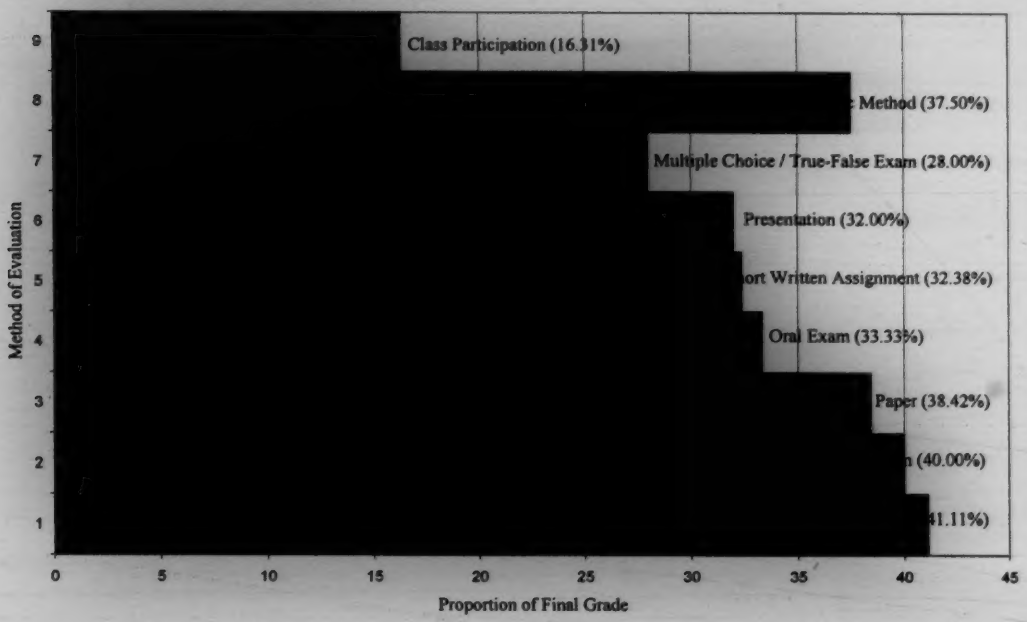


Figure 4 shows the proportion of final grades attributed to each evaluation method.

Figure 4. Proportion of Final Grade for Each Evaluation Method



Essay/term paper.

Twenty-one (72.41%) of the 29 syllabi listed an essay or term paper as part of the final grade. The proportion of the final grade devoted to the essay/term paper assignment ranged from 25 to 55 percent, with an average of 38.42%. Page length suggestions for these major papers ranged from 4 to 20 pages and students were often allowed to generate their own topics. For many paper assignments students were encouraged to include clear statements of the ethical or legal issues involved; a discussion of applicable standards, codes and legislation; to articulate both sides of an issue with an integration of their own opinions; to apply decision-making skills; make suggestions for professional and policy issues; literature reviews; and to comment on field trip experiences. Overall, suggested essay topics cover a broad range of ethical issues from the training of

psychologists to applied practice. Examples of possible essay topics were also provided in many syllabi and are listed in Table 9.

Table 9

Descriptions of Evaluation Method

Essay/Term Paper Topics
Ethics in research, teaching and supervision
Ethical issues in therapy
Ethical issues with special populations
Ethnicity, culture and gender diversity
Competence, self-care and self-monitoring
Ethical issues in specialized settings
Masters vs. doctoral licensing
The viability of the scientist-practitioner model
Professional psychology (Psy. D) programs
Specialist vs. generalist licensing or training
Therapy and counselling with women or minorities
Mandatory reporting of child abuse and therapeutic effectiveness
Duty to warn
Training to provide services in rural communities
Empirically supported therapies
The social role played by counsellors in community change and the values and belief that correspond to that role

Class participation.

The syllabi indicated that 19 (65.51%) out of 29 of the courses included class participation as part of the final grade. The proportion of final grades devoted to class participation ranged from 10 to 50 percent with an average proportion of 16.31% of the final grade. Attendance and constructive class participation were often cited as indicative of students' understanding and ability to think critically about the material.

Presentations.

Fifteen (51.72%) of 29 courses required students to complete an in-class presentation as part of their final grade. The proportion of final grades covered by presentations ranged from 10 to 50 per cent, with an average of 32.00% going to the final mark. Presentation assignments varied from presenting clinical vignettes with a class discussion around the ethical issues involved, to journal article reports. In some cases students were encouraged to be creative in their approach and could present in the form of role plays, debates, mock complaint hearings, and so forth. Some presentations were individual while others could be done in small groups. Often the purpose of the presentation was to facilitate thoughtful class discussion as well as provide additional educational material on the topic being covered. Table 10 shows various examples of the presentation assignments.

Table 10

Descriptions of Method of Evaluation

Student-Lead Instruction/Presentation Assignments
Presenting a clinical vignette/dilemma that applies to the student's topic and should be presented as a discussion of how you would apply the CPA's code of ethics and ethical decision-making process to address the dilemma. Be creative in your presentation (e.g. role playing, debates, etc).
Select a current or emerging ethical issue relevant to school and counselling psychology that you would like to investigate in depth.
Read and report in class on one of the suggested articles
Apply the CPA decision making model to vignettes
Student will be responsible for organizing discussion around one of the weekly topics. Facilitators can use various formats (e.g. debate, role play, small group or whole class tasks and activities)
Students may do a 1 hour presentation on a topic which will not be covered in class

Table 10 Continued

Descriptions of Method of Evaluation
Student-Lead Instruction/Presentation Assignments
Students are required to select one seminar in which they: 1) identify key issues based on a critical review of the readings; and 2) present illustrative dilemmas to stimulate discussion about these issues.
Oral presentation based on term paper
Lead a seminar session
Lead discussion of an assigned vignette using ethical decision making procedures, relevant standards and polices, using relevant standards
To prepare an adequately-researched class presentation on an issue relevant to the profession of clinical psychology. Students may work individually or in teams of 2 to 3 Dilemma development, work as a moderator, solution

Short written assignments.

In 15 (51.72%) out of the 29 courses a non-essay short written assignment was required. The proportion of final grades attributed to short written assignments ranged from 6 to 65 per cent, with an average of 32.38%. Assignments were varied and in some cases it was difficult to tell the nature of the task from the syllabus. Students were asked to complete a wide range of assignments such as preparing bibliographies, analyzing ethical dilemmas and completing on-line tutorials. In one course, students were given credit for assisting fellow students with the research for their presentations.

Exams.

Twenty-two (75.86%) of the 29 courses included an exam as part of the student evaluation and the exams ranged from 20 to 55 percent, with an average weighting of 40.45% of the final mark. Exams took the formats of: Multiple Choice / True-False; Short Answer / Essay; Oral; and Unknown Format.

Multiple choice / true-false exams.

Ten (34.49%) of the 29 courses included a multiple choice/true-false exam. The proportion of final grades generated from multiple choice/true-false exams ranged from 20 to 35 percent, with an average weighting of 28.00%. Several syllabi indicated that exams were similar in format to the Examination for the Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP), which is the standard written examination in North American jurisdictions for psychologists to become licensed to practice. Other exams were based upon materials from course lectures and textbooks.

Unknown format exams.

The syllabi listed an exam for 9 (31.03%) of the 29 courses and for which the format was not clear. The proportion of final grades covered by an unknown exam format ranged from 20 to 50 percent, with an average weighting of 41.11%.

Short answer / essay exam.

Five (17.24%) of the courses included a short answer/essay exam. The proportion of final grades devoted to short answer/essay exams ranged from 20 to 100 percent, with an average of 40%. Because one of the courses included only short answer/essay examinations as the evaluative component it is likely that this course skewed the results to increase the overall average. For this reason I report that the modal proportion of the final grade is 20% and the median is 25%. Many of the short answer/essay exams included theoretical issues and analysis of case studies. Students were often required to use the CPA decision-making model to work through and resolve ethical dilemmas.

Oral exam.

Three (10.34%) of the courses included an oral exam in their final evaluation. The proportion of final grades covered by oral examinations ranged from 30 to 35 per cent,

with an average weighting of 33.33%. An expressed rationale within one syllabus using an oral exam is stated that registration within a College of Psychology requires that a psychologist or a psychological associate pass an oral exam on ethical guidelines, jurisprudence and regulations that pertain to their area of practice. For this reason, the inclusion of an oral exam was described as practice for the oral licensing exam. Students were asked to identify the dilemma, discuss ethical principles in conflict, and suggest possible courses of action to resolve the dilemma.

Idiosyncratic methods of evaluation.

Two (6.90%) of the 29 courses included a unique form of evaluation in their final grades. The proportion of final grades devoted to these unique methods of evaluation ranged from 35 to 40 per cent, with an average of 37.50%. These idiosyncratic methods drew upon unique approaches to engage students and included ethical review panel exercises, ethical policy-making exercises, development of a professional portfolio and a documentary film festival entry.

Topics of Instruction

All (100.00%) of the syllabi provided information regarding the educational content of the courses by listing topics of discussion for each class date. Course topics that addressed similar issues were combined into 12 groups with 10 subcategories, resulting in 22 topic categories in total. A list of the 22 topic categories can be seen in Table 11.

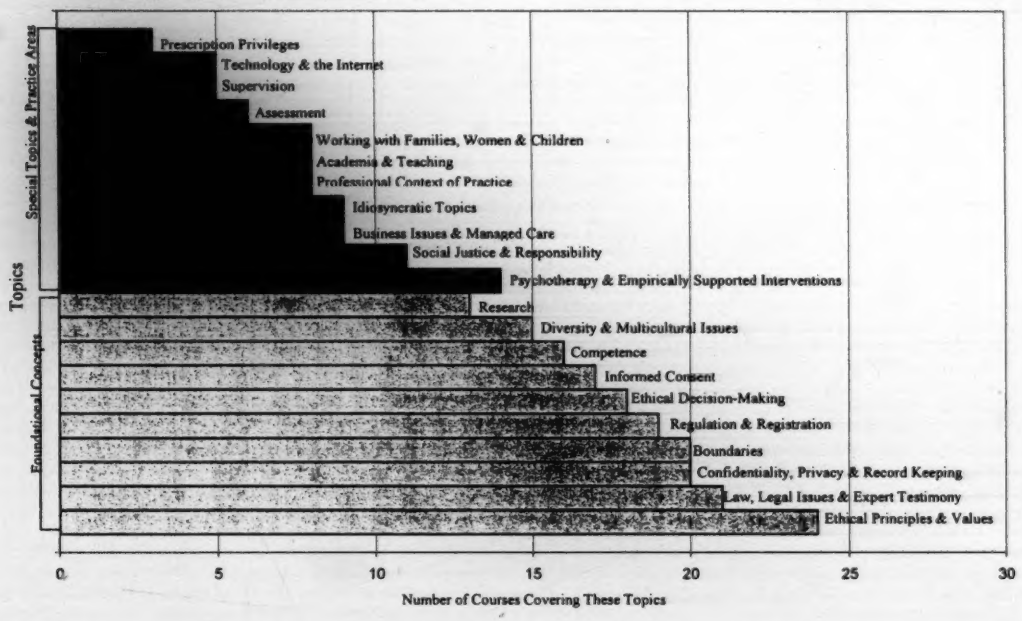
Table 11

The Twelve Topic Areas Covered in Ethics Courses

Foundational Concepts
1. Ethical Principles and Values
2. Law, Legal Issues and Expert Testimony
3. Confidentiality, Privacy and Record-Keeping
4. Boundaries
5. Regulation and Registration
6. Ethical Decision-Making
7. Informed Consent
8. Competence
9. Diversity and Multicultural Issues
10. Research
11. Special Topics and Practice Areas:
Psychotherapy and Empirically Supported Interventions
Social Justice and Responsibility
Business Issues and Managed Care
Professional Context of Practice
Academia & Teaching
Working with Families, Women and Children
Assessment
Supervision
Technology and the Internet
Prescription Privileges
12. Idiosyncratic Topics:
Recovered Memories
Pain and Sexual Functioning
Third Party and Conflicting Loyalties
Practicing in Rural Areas
Less Defined Areas of Practice
Career Goals

The topic categories and the number of courses covering these topics can be seen in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Topics Covered in Ethics Courses



The 12 categories identified were: Ethical Principles and Values; Law, Legal Issues and Expert Testimony; Confidentiality, Privacy and Record Keeping; Boundaries; Regulation and Registration; Ethical Decision-Making; Informed Consent; Diversity and Multicultural Issues; Competence; and Research. The eleventh category was labelled "Special Topics and Practice Areas" and was composed of 11 subtopics. These 11 subtopics were: Psychotherapy and Empirically Supported Interventions; Social Justice and Responsibility; Business Issues and Managed Care; Professional Context of Practice; Academia and Teaching; Working with Families, Women and Children; Assessment; Supervision; Technology and the Internet; and Prescription Privileges. The twelfth category was labelled "Idiosyncratic Topics" and included remaining topics that were

unique and related to very specialized areas of practice and did not appear to fit into any of the other categories.

Ten foundational concepts.

The first 10 topic categories that were most frequently in the 29 courses appeared to be foundational concepts in ethics training and were: Ethical Principles and Values; Law, Legal Issues & Expert Testimony; Confidentiality, Privacy and Record Keeping; Boundaries; Regulation and Registration; Ethical Decision-Making; Informed Consent; Competence; Diversity and Multicultural Issues; and Research. These 10 topics are in essence foundational concepts in psychology ethics training. Out of all 22 topics, these 10 foundational concepts were the most commonly covered (with the exception of the special topic of Psychotherapy and Empirically Supported Interventions). The foundational concepts were then followed by 11 special topics that were more specific to particular areas of practice, and the idiosyncratic areas that did not appear to fit into any other category.

Ethical principles and values.

Twenty-four (82.76%) of the 29 syllabi indicate that topics fitting into the category of Ethical Principles & Values are covered. This category included specific discussion around codes of conduct, various professional codes of ethics, often with specific reference to the CPA code of ethics and its four overarching principles. Instructors also addressed more expansive topics such as morality, values and what it is to be an ethical practitioner. Discussion around self-awareness in terms of personal attitudes, values, and socialization were also included in the examination of professional ethics. Some courses addressed the philosophical and historical foundations of

professional ethics, including moral theory, philosophical perspectives and landmarks in modern ethics inquiry. A list of topics included in this category can be seen in Table 12.

Table 12

Descriptions of Topic
Ethical Principles and Values
Overview to 4 principles
The Ethical Practitioner
CPA Manual Principle 1: Respect for the Dignity of Persons (who is the client? Informed Consent, Confidentially, Privacy, Record Keeping)
CPA Manual Principle III: Integrity in relationships
Philosophical & Historical Foundations of ethics and professional codes of conduct (morality, ethical principles, values, rules &laws)
CPA Manual principle II: responsible Caring
Introduction to clinical ethics
APA, ASPPB, and psychoanalytic codes of ethics
CPA Principles : I to IV
The APA Code of Ethics. Codes of Conduct, Practice Guidelines and other guidelines
Philosophical foundations for professional ethics
The relationship of morality, ethical principles, values, rules, behaviour, and law
History of the development of professional codes of ethics and conduct. Ethical decision making models
Codes of ethics. Codes of conduct. Special interventions ASPPB Video
Self –awareness of personal attitudes, biases, individual socialization.
Ethical issues with regard to diversity and vulnerable populations e.g. disabilities, ethnicity, poverty, gender, age
Basic issues of respect for the dignity of persons: who is the client, informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, access to services, record keeping
Values in Counselling
Canadian Code of Ethics
Ethical Principles and values; ethics codes
Values of a counsellor

Table 12 Continued

Descriptions of Topic
Ethical Principles and Values
History and Purposes of Professional Codes of Ethics
Principles and Structures of Professional Codes of Ethics
Ethical Decision-Making Models
Introduction to the course and ethics
APA and CPA codes and ethical decision making
Professional ethics and introduction to the APA and CPA codes
Theoretical ethics
Landmarks in modern ethics. Philosophical perspectives on ethics. Overview of CCA and CPA codes of ethics
Ethical codes and guidelines
Principles from moral theory
Treat people as an end in themselves, rather than as a means to an end.
Act as you would want others to act. [In similar circumstances?]
Do the greatest good for the greatest number
Rights trump utilities
Principle II Responsible Caring:
In some areas, including forensic psychology, it is not always clear to whom the psychologist is (or should be) responsible. Consider II.1, II.2, II.4, II.13 and II.14; taken together, they are powerful requirements that the psychologist promote the welfare of...whom? The client? The service recipient? The most vulnerable person in the situation? Are these always the same? If not, are their interests always the same? Does the client have the absolute right to decide the goal of treatment? Can a therapist work toward some other goal for the client's own good, or must the therapist decide either to work toward the client's goal or to discontinue therapy?
Comparative Ethical Standards and problems
Ethical codes and regulatory standards
Individual ethics/standards
History/Orientation
Professionalization and Social Ethics
Introduction, Ethical Principles and Systems
Total Number of programs covering this topic: 24 (86.76%)

The topics in this category have some overlap with other categories as specific areas of the four main ethical principles of the CPA code of ethics were often addressed separately. For example, confidentially and informed consent are included in Principle 1: Respect for the Dignity of Persons, but were often discussed separately.

Law, legal issues and expert testimony.

Twenty-one (72.41%) of the 29 courses covered law, legal issues and expert testimony. Issues around legislation, legal principles, procedures and jurisprudence pertinent to psychological practice were included in this category. Descriptions of topics included in this category can be seen in Table 13.

Table 13

Descriptions of Topic
Law, Legal Issues & Expert Testimony
Child custody
Forensic Settings
Law and Legal Standards
Law & legislation, mandatory reporting, education and special education; human rights
Law, legislation and ethics
Issues in forensics
Custody and access assessments
Overview of legal issues in counselling
Personal records, subpoenas and malpractice
Clinical psychology in the courts
Child abuse
Legislation affecting the practice of psychology including the Health Professions Act
Child protection
Legal Accountability and expert witness
Legislation affecting psychologists – relevant legislation
Education and mental health legislation
Professional and legal issues
Psychologists in the Legal System

Table 13 Continued

Descriptions of Topic
Law, Legal Issues & Expert Testimony
Child Abuse, family law and the Youth Justice System
Psychology and the law – legal principles, procedures and jurisprudence pertinent to psychological practice
Various provincial acts pertaining to issues related to psychologists (e.g. adult guardianship act)
Issues relating to neuropsychology, competence to consent and substitute decision-making
Ethics and the law
Total Number of programs covering this topic: 21 (72.41%)

Confidentiality, privacy and record keeping.

Twenty (68.97%) of the 29 courses covered confidentiality, privacy & record keeping as a separate topic. As mentioned above, issues such as confidentiality and privacy are included in Principle 1: Respect for the Dignity of Persons and may be covered on class days that discuss the first principle, however, in these 20 courses it appears that the three issues of confidentiality, privacy and record keeping were identified as specific topics.

Professional boundaries.

Twenty (68.97%) of the 29 courses discussed issues around professional boundaries. Boundary issues include dual-roles relationships, attraction, romance, sexual intimacies, conflicts of interest, fee collection, and bartering. Boundary issues were often discussed in terms of the principles of Responsible Caring and Integrity in Relationships.

Regulation and registration.

Nineteen (65.51%) of the 29 courses covered such topics as licensing, regulatory statues, and standards related to psychology. Codes of conduct, jurisprudence

examinations and the roles of collegial bodies were included in this category. A list of topics included in the regulation and registration group can be seen in Table 14.

Table 14

Descriptions of Topic
Regulation & Registration
College of Psychologist Act, CPNB By Lays, Licensing Guidelines
Standards for Providers of Psychological Services
Codes and laws pertaining to the practice of psychology
Code of conduct
Psychologists Regulation
CPBC code of conduct
HPA: psychologists regulations
Standards and models of practice
Continuing Education, practice review, professional liability and the disciplinary process
The process of becoming registered (EPPP and Jurisprudence Exams)
Overview of regulatory statutes and standards relevant to psychologists
Declaration of competency areas and the registration process, quality assurance review
The basics of credentialing, regulation, globalization and mobility. Implications for graduate education, career options and mobility
The emergence of competency-based admission to practice
Role of regulatory & credentialing bodies
Standards for Providers of Psychological Services. Practice Guidelines CPA
College of psychologist act
CPNB by-laws
Licensing Guidelines
Professional Organizations and Protection of the Public
Intro to concepts regulation of professional practice
College of Alberta psychologists regulatory requirements
Regulation, mobility, and Health professions act
Professional standards; legal standards; regulation
Regulation of psychology
Tricky Issues in Psychology

Table 14 Continued

Descriptions of Topic
Regulation & Registration
Issues related to Registration and governance of psychologists
Legislation and professional practice (e.g. HIPA, the psychologists Act)
Standards affecting the practice of counselling and school psychology
SCP, CPA, CPAP, CCA
Total Number of Courses Covering This Topic: 19 (65.51%)

Ethical decision-making.

The CCOEP provides an ethical decision-making model through which psychologists can analyze and resolve ethical dilemmas. Eighteen (62.07%) of the courses addressed how to use the ethical decision-making process to understand, appreciate and resolve ethical conflicts. Of the 18 courses that listed ethical decision-making as a topic of discussion, thirteen (72.22%) specifically identified the CCOEP ethical decision making model as the method discussed. The remaining five (27.78%) courses did not specifically identify a particular model.

Informed consent.

Informed consent is one of the hallmark issues addressed in Principle 1: Respect for the Dignity of Persons. Seventeen (58.62%) courses cited informed consent as a topic of instruction. Also included here are issues around professional disclosure and the right to refuse treatment. Importantly, most of the courses that did not appear to cover informed consent did appear to at least discuss ethical codes. Therefore, it is possible that informed consent was described through a discussion of the four ethical principle of the CPA code of ethics. Three (10.34%) courses did not appear to cover informed consent or ethical codes.

Competence.

Sixteen (55.17%) of the courses included competence as a topic. A listing of topics included in this category can be seen in Table 15.

Table 15

Descriptions of Topic
Competence
Practice Issues
Professional Liability
Competency
Monitoring one's practice in School and Counselling Psychology
Individual and agency responsibilities
Responsibility for colleagues
Care for self
The professional Counsellor
Maintaining Professional Competence and training
How competency and ethics are related. Professional mobility. Monitoring one's own practice
Issues of Professional Competence and Training
New horizons in the practice of psychology: Professional Liability
Competence, Self-care, and self monitoring
Maintaining and enhancing competence
Knowing thyself: competence and credentials
Total Number of Courses Covering This Topic: 16 (55.17%)

Diversity and multicultural issues.

Fifteen (51.72%) of the courses included diversity and multicultural discussions as a topic. A list of topics included in this category can be seen in Table 16.

Table 16

Descriptions of Topic
Diversity & Multicultural Issues
Influence of Culture on Professional Codes of Ethics
Working with minorities
Ethnically sensitive therapy. Cultural context of the ACA code of ethics
Gay, Lesbian, Transgender Issues
Multicultural Issues
Providing Services Across Cultures
Respecting human rights; multicultural competencies
Principle 2: Responsible Caring. Guidelines for Non-Discriminatory Practice
Counselling Clients from Diverse Communities
Respect and caring in cross-cultural counselling
Diversity Issues in the Practice of Psychology: Multicultural perspectives
Working with diverse populations
Ethnicity, culture and gender diversity
Total Number of Courses Covering This Topic: 15 (51.72%)

Research.

Thirteen (44.83%) of the courses included some coverage on research as part of their topics of discussion.

Special Topics and Areas of Practice.

There were 11 topic areas that did not appear to fall within the 10 foundational areas but were in and of themselves seemingly distinct topic areas. These special topics and practice areas were as follows: Psychotherapy and Empirically Supported Interventions was the most common special topic discussed in 14 (48.28%) courses. Social Justice and Responsibility was next with 11 (37.93%) courses covering them, including areas such as social action; responsibility to "the client", society, and the profession; and social justice issues such as racism, sexual orientation, gender and

poverty. Business Issues and Managed Care were addressed in 9 (31.03%) courses. The Professional Context of Practice was broad area that ranged from ethical dilemmas in specific work settings, the history of psychology, training and internships to presenting psychology to the public. Eight (27.59%) courses covered professional context and a list of these special topics in the professional context of practice can be seen in Table 17.

Table 17

Description of Topic
Special Topics & Practice Areas
Professional Context of Practice (History and Future Issues)
Current Issues: Ethical Dilemmas in Specific Work Settings
Psychology and Prescribing Medicine issues
Marital & Family Therapy issues
Predicting Violence issues
Working in community organizations issues
'Being in the Public' issues
Money Matters and Managed Care
Psychologists in the Marketplace
Presenting Psychology to the Public
Clinical Psychology in the health context, multidisciplinary issues
Clinical psychology
Organization of professional psychology
Training/internship
Ethics and policy issues
Clinical training opportunities
The future of clinical psychology
Scientific foundations of school psychology
The profession of school psychology
History and organization of the profession; school psychology in Canada
Roles and functions
Issues in counsellor education and supervision and consultation
An evolving profession – issues for the first decade of the 21st century

Table 17 Continued

Description of Topic
Special Topics & Practice Areas
Professional Context of Practice (History and Future Issues)
Professional psychology: history, current organization and issues – psychology in Canada: evolution and current status
Education and training: Boulder and professional models
Psychology as a health profession
Balancing psychology as an enterprise and as a service. The future of professional psychology: 2008 and beyond
Role of provincial & national association
Introduction to professional issues in counselling

Academia and Teaching refers to topics addressing competence and integrity in teaching, scholarly activities and authorship and was covered in eight (27.59%) courses. Ethical issues were also discussed around working with families, women and children in eight (27.59%) courses; Assessment in 6 (20.69%) courses; Supervision in 5 (17.24%) courses; Technology and the internet in 5 (17.24%) courses; and Prescription Privileges in 3 (10.34%) courses. Finally, there was a category I labelled "Idiosyncratic Topics" that were covered in 9 (31.03%) of courses and that included special topics and practice areas such as recovered memories, issues related to pain and sexual functioning, third party and conflicting loyalties, practicing in rural areas, less defined areas of practice and career goals.

Textbook Selections

Twenty-four (82.76%) of the 29 syllabi included a list of required and/or suggested textbooks. Table 18 shows a list of the most commonly cited texts.

Table 18

Textbooks Required or Recommended for the Twenty-Four Courses that Cited Text Readings

Textbook	Required	Suggested	Total	Percent
Canadian Psychological Association (2001). *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists: Companion manual*. 3rd Edition. Ottawa, ON: Author.	10	2	12	50.00%
Canadian Psychological Association (2001). *A Code of Ethics for Canadian Psychologists*. Ottawa, ON: Author.	6	2	8	33.33%
Truscott, D. & Cróok, K.H. (2004). *Ethics for the Practice of Psychology in Canada*. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press.	4	3	7	29.16%
Evans, D. R. (2004). *The Law, Standards of Practice, and Ethics in the Practice of Psychology*. 2nd edition. Toronto, ON: Emond Montgomery.	3	2	5	20.83%
Canadian Counselling Association (1999). *Code of ethics*. Ottawa, ON: Author.	4	0	4	16.66%
Koocher, G. P. & Keith-Spiegel, P. (1998). *Ethics in psychology*: Professional standards and cases. (2nd Ed.) New York: Oxford University Press.	2	2	4	16.66%
Corey, G., Corey, M., & Callanan, P. (2003). *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Profession* (6th Ed.). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.	3	0	3	12.50%
Canadian Psychological Association (2001). *Practice guidelines for providers of psychological services*. Ottawa, ON: Author.	2	0	2	8.33%
Canadian Counselling Association (2001). *Standards of Practice for Counsellors*. Ottawa, Ontario: Author.	2	0	2	8.33%
Schultz, W. (Ed.). (2000). *Counselling Ethics Casebook 2000*. Ottawa: Canadian Counselling Association.	1	1	2	8.33%
Uhlemann, Max R. & Turner, David (1998). *A Legal Handbook for the Helping Professional*. Victoria, B.C.: Sedgewick Society.	1	1	2	8.33%
American Psychological Association (2002). *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*. Washington, D.C.: Author	1	0	1	4.16%

Table 18 Continued

Textbooks Required or Recommended for the Twenty-Four Courses that Cited Text Readings

Textbook	Required	Suggested	Total	Percent
American Psychological Association (1999). *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing.* Washington, D.C: APA	0	1	1	4.16%
Bersoff, D. N. (2003). *Ethical Conflicts in Psychology* (3rd edition). American Psychological Association: Washington, D.C.	1	0	1	4.16%
College of Psychologists (2002). *Standards of Professional Conduct*	0	1	1	4.16%
Keith-Spiegel, P. & Koocher, G. (1985). *Ethics in Psychology: Professional standards and cases.* Toronto: McGraw-Hill.	0	1	1	4.16%
McEvoy, M. & Reid, G. (1997). *Balancing Conflicting Interests: A counsellor's guide to legal process.* Vancouver, B.C.: Justice Institute of BC	1	0	1	4.16%
Regulated Health Professions Act (1991)	0	1	1	4.16%
Sales, B.D. & Folkman, S. (2000). *Ethics in Research with Human Participants.* Washington DC: American Psychological Association.	1	0	1	4.16%
Sheppard, Glenn W. (2006). *A Collection of Cognica Notebooks on Ethics, Legal Issues, and Standards for Counsellors.* St. John's, NL.	1	0	1	4.16%
The Psychology Act (1991)	0	1	1	4.16%
Tri Council Policy Statement (1998). *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*	0	1	1	4.16%

The Companion Manual for the Code of Ethics for Psychologists (2001) and the Canadian Code of Ethics for Canadian Psychologists (2001) were the two most commonly required/suggested texts in the 24 courses that identified course textbooks, followed by Truscott & Crook (2004), Evans (2004), the Canadian Counselling Association (1999) code of ethics, Koocher & Keith-Spiegel (1998) and Corey, Corey &

Callanan (2003). The remaining texts were cited in two or fewer courses for a total of 22 different textbook choices.

Chapter Five Discussion

This study was intended to provide a snapshot of the current state of ethics training in university-based clinical, counselling and school psychology programs in Canada. A review of online calendars and program websites was done to obtain an overview of the availability and requirements of formal ethics education in graduate programs. Course syllabi were gathered to examine course goals, course format, evaluative methods, and course content in depth. Thirty-nine programs were identified through the CPA website and were included in this study.

Availability and Requirement of Ethics Courses

As the research of the past fifty years has suggested, formal ethics education has been steadily increasing (e.g. DePalma & Drake, 1956; Tymchuk, et al., 1979; Tymchuk, 1981, 1985; Pettifor & Pitcher, 1982; Stein, 1990; Vanek, 1990). Focus on ethics training in Canada also appears to have increased dramatically. In the only Canadian study to date, Pettifor and Pitcher (1982) found that 56% of programs offered a separate course in ethics and only 7.4% of these courses were required. In the present study, the amount of information available on program websites varied from university to university. Some contained brief descriptions of their programs while other provided a comprehensive guide to their programs of study. Almost all of the program websites cited some training philosophy or mission whereby students, in part of being prepared to practice effectively as psychologists, would gain knowledge and skills in ethical and professional standards in academic and clinical settings. Promotion of ethical behaviour both within the training program and following graduation was endorsed as a fundamental program objective. Moreover, many doctoral programs require their students to pass an oral comprehensive

examination in ethics as well. Given the expectation of ethical behaviour, it is not surprising that 37 out of the 39 programs (94.87%) required at least a half course in graduate level ethics for their students to complete their degree programs. In addition, all of the 39 programs in clinical, counselling psychology and school psychology offered at least one separate course in ethics to their students. It is not surprising that the APA and CPA approved programs would include a required ethics course in their curriculum, as this is a necessary component for accreditation. What was unknown, however, was whether or not non-accredited clinical, counselling psychology and school psychology programs would provide and require formal ethics training. The increase in formalized ethics education over the past few decades not only points to greater compliance with CPA and APA accreditation requirements, but it also attests to an increased commitment to education in ethical practice on the part of psychology training programs.

Course Objectives

Delineating the appropriate goals for ethics education is a demanding and ambitious undertaking. The objectives identified for ethics education reflects strongly on the profession's goals for ethical practice. The course objectives were grouped into 6 broad categories and were, in order of frequency: Knowledge and Understanding of Ethical Codes, Laws, Legislation, Regulation and Standards of Professional Practice; Increased Sensitivity to Ethical Issues; Development of Skills and Resources for Ethical Decision-Making; Understanding of the Professional Identity and Social Responsibilities of Psychologists; Self Knowledge of Personal Perspectives, Biases, Personal Growth for Competent Practice; and Cross-Cultural Knowledge and Understanding for Non-Discriminatory Practice. In essence, these 6 objectives appear to serve 3 functions: to

increase awareness, knowledge and skills with regard to psychology ethics. That is, one must be aware of what constitutes an ethical dilemma, knowledgeable about the laws, standards and codes that apply and have the skills to put that awareness and knowledge into action. Indeed, as Truscott & Crook (2004) state, awareness, knowledge and skills are a "triumvirate of requirements" needed to be an ethical psychologist.

Instructional Method

Twenty-eight syllabi provided information on course format, and one was structured as an on-line distance learning course. Modes of instruction were didactic lectures, class discussion (large or small groups), use of case studies, student-led instruction, and guest speakers. One course required to complete volunteer activities and another course had students interview practicing clinicians with regard to their experiences with ethical dilemmas in the field. In terms of ethics instruction, there is considerable debate as to the most effective ways to structure and deliver ethics instruction (Kessler, 1983; Pettifor & Pitcher, 1982; Welfel, 1992). Approaches to teaching ethics that integrate philosophical knowledge to teach ethical decision-making appears to be gaining acceptance amongst psychology educators (Fine & Ulrich, 1988). For example, Fine and Ulrich (1988) suggest formal course work ought to include instruction in utilitarian and deontological frameworks of ethical decision-making. In contrast, Pettifor, Estay and Paquet (2002) argue for teaching approaches that consider adult education research. Specifically, they investigated learners' perceived level of helpfulness with regard to seven different strategies for learning ethics. The authors found that participants preferred group discussions of vignettes and answering questions, which is consistent with the adult learning literature that suggests that most adult learners

have a need for hands on and interactive approaches, and find more individual or didactic approaches to be less useful. Eberlein (1987) suggests a problem-solving approach based upon the Canadian Code of Ethics. White (1988) presents a rationale and procedure for a computerized approach to ethical dilemmas and then argues that ethical training necessitates two tasks: (a) first learning ethical guidelines and legal requirements and then (b) learning to apply them. DeNicolis-Bragger and Freeman (2000) looked at the teaching of research ethics and studied methods of Cost-Benefit Analysis to teach ethics. They found this approach to be helpful in demonstrating to students the ways in which they could quantify their ethical judgments of case studies of psychological research and use this numerical data to determine whether research should be conducted. In addition, Knapp and VandeCreek (2004) have recommended the use of case law and to describe specifics of disciplinary hearings in order to illustrate crucial ethical issues.

Evaluation Method

All of the 29 syllabi contained information on how students' performance would be evaluated. Students were evaluated by Exams, Essays or Term Papers, Class Participation, Student Presentations, and Short Written Assignments. Several courses used multiple choice exams that resemble the EPPP and/or oral exams that resemble the oral examination required for registration with provincial colleges. Research is lacking around the most effective and valid measures with which to evaluate students' ethical competency. Most often concerns have been raised in relation to how ethics training in graduate school translates to ethical practice (Baldick, 1980; Haas, Malouf, & Mayerson, 1986, Lipsitz, 1986; Tymchuk, 1985; Wood et al., 1985). However, the research on outcomes of ethics training has been somewhat inconsistent. Baldick (1980) used the

Ethical Discrimination Inventory (EDI) instrument to identify specific components of the APA ethical principles, and he studied students' ability to discriminate ethical issues. He found that students who had completed a course in ethics were able to discriminate ethical issues at a significantly higher rate than students who received no formal ethics training. However, Lipsitz (1986) followed up on Baldick's (1980) research and found no significant relationship between formal ethics training and performance on the EDI. Furthermore, studies examining students' perception of their ability to handle ethical dilemmas have conflicted. Tymchuk (1985) found that 80% of the students in his sample felt insufficiently prepared to deal with ethical issues. In contrast, Lipsitz's (1986) sample of pre-doctoral interns indicated that 87.5% had confidence in their ability to handle ethical issues. In addition, there were conflicting findings between two studies that examined the relationship between ethics education and ethical reasoning on the part of practitioners after graduate school. Wood et al. (1985) surveyed licensed psychologists' opinions and found that psychologists who had taken a course in ethics were more likely to be able to identify ethically compromising situations, more likely to offer help to an impaired colleague, and to report an impaired colleague to a regulatory body. Wood et al. (1985) concluded that inclusion of ethics courses in psychology curricula is necessary. On the other hand, Haas, Malouf and Mayerson (1986) explored the ethical choices made by practicing psychologists and found a great deal of variability between responses to vignettes and formal ethics training. De las Fuentes, Wilmuth and Yarrow's (2005) overview of the 2002 Competencies Conference addressed assessment of competence in ethics. While they acknowledged the difficulty in assessing values and attitudes, they did regard an assessment of "goodness of fit" as essential. They discussed the value of

formative and summative assessments within graduate programs of ethics competencies. Formative assessments were determined as to whether formal training objectives had been met (e.g. completing a course in ethics). Summative assessments, on the other hand, were suggested, where attention is given to students' behaviour and ethical integrity in every course throughout training (e.g. monitoring, academic honesty, ethical decision making in response to critical incidents, etc). The authors point out that, unfortunately, most summative evaluations of ethics competencies take place by ethics committees and boards after a violation has already occurred.

Course Content

The ten most frequently cited topics were foundational concepts of Ethical Principles and Values; Law, Legal Issues and Expert Testimony; Confidentiality, Privacy and Record Keeping; Boundaries; Regulation & Registration; Ethical Decision-Making; Informed Consent; Competence; Diversity & Multicultural Issues; and Research. Special Topics and Practice Areas included Psychotherapy and Empirically Supported Interventions; Social Justice and Responsibility; Business Issues and Managed Care; Professional Context of Practice; Academia and Teaching; Working with Families, Women and Children; Assessment; Supervision; Technology and the Internet; Prescription Privileges and Idiosyncratic Topics. These results appear to be mostly consistent with prior research, where Tymchuk et al. (1979), Pettifor and Pitcher (1982), and Vanek (1990) reported similar content areas. However, it does appear that areas such as ethical decision-making and diversity and multicultural issues are increasingly being covered, though many authors have raised criticisms suggesting that psychology ethics do not effectively represent and incorporate a multicultural context (e.g., Casas &

Thompson, 1991; Pedersen & Leong, 1997). In addition, Research Ethics is still a common topic; however, it appears to be less common than what has been reported in prior studies, where it was the most cited topic (e.g. Tymchuk et al., 1979; Pettifor & Pitcher, 1982). Overall, it appears that the programs evaluated here are covering main areas of professional ethical competence as well as many of the emerging issues in ethics. Psychologists are often required to apply what ethical knowledge they have to new and unique ethical issues and questions. As Truscott & Crook (2004) state,

> "Professional psychologists must become familiar with the foundational issues and principles in each of the areas of ethics, professional standards, and legal standards. These constitute the core knowledge that psychologists need to guide them when a professional consensus has already been reached and the guiding principles to reason ethically when faced with situations for which a professional consensus has not been met" (p. xviii).

Moreover, Truscott & Crook (2004) argue that in addition to this core knowledge, are the other "major critical ethical issues that confront psychologists: informed consent, confidentiality, professional boundaries, competence, providing services across cultures, and social justice". Many authors have posited the limitations of ethical codes in assisting with ethical judgments (e.g. Kitchener, 1984; Mabe & Rollin, 1986; Neukrug, Lovell, & Parker, 1996; Talbutt, 1981) or raised criticisms suggesting that the ethical codes in counseling and psychology do not effectively represent and incorporate a multicultural context (e.g., Casas & Thompson, 1991; Pedersen & Leong 1997).

Recommended or Required Texts

The main materials for ethics education were textbooks and various CPA documents. In many instances academic journal articles and case studies were also

assigned to prepare students for discussion around particular topics. It appears that much of ethics training itself is defined by the materials used for instruction. The most commonly cited texts and material choices were, in descending order of frequency, The Companion Manual for the Code of Ethics for Psychologists (2001) and the Canadian Code of Ethics for Canadian Psychologists (2001), Truscott & Crook (2004), Evans (2004), the Canadian Counselling Association (1999) Code of Ethics, Keith-Spiegel & Koocher (1998) and Corey, Corey & Callanan (2003). Again, for the purposes of this study, my aim was to compile a list of commonly used instructional materials for the purpose of sharing this information with course instructors, not to conduct a critique or evaluation of these texts. It was encouraging that most of the programs required students to be acquainted with current editions of their professional codes, as Davidson, Garton and Joyce (2003) found that in their survey of ethics education in Australian training programs several syllabi listed superseded versions of the Australian Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct. It is critical that students are familiar with the most up to date versions of their professional codes.

Limitations and Future Directions for Research

When considering the results of the analyses here it is important to acknowledge the sources of limitations. The purpose of the current investigation was to obtain a snapshot of how professional psychology ethics education is being delivered in Canada. At this point, however, the quality of this education is unknown. For instance, we know what areas are being covered, however, we do not know if this is being done so in an effective way. Furthermore, while the examination of syllabi offers a reasonable and direct method for obtaining data there were some limitations in this approach. Some of

the syllabi were more detailed than others, therefore, possible data may have been missing from some syllabi. Also, it is difficult to know whether or not the material and formats listed in the syllabi were actually carried out within the classrooms. Use of surveys to obtain research data is a possible alternative; however, there are weaknesses inherent in survey research as well, including the self-selection of the final sample, the tendency to provide socially desirable and non-extreme answers on Likert-type scales. Also, it is important to note that analyzing the information contained in the syllabi was somewhat interpretive. Thus, the author's own perspective may be reflected in the present interpretations. For example, the decision to define confidentiality, privacy and record-keeping as one group may not have been made by other researchers. For this reason, tables detailing the syllabi text segments that were categorized into each group were included in this study, to provide an opportunity for others to examine the contents of each category. An additional limitation resides in the fact that course outlines were not available for every program, which limits the generalizability of the findings.

In terms of future research, there appears to be an increase in support for the integration of ethics training throughout psychology graduate training curriculum (De las Fuentes, Wilmuth and Yarrow, 2005). The current investigation only included courses that mentioned ethics or professional issues in the course title or description. Thus, there may be courses in which ethics topics are covered informally but that do not indicate such in the course calendar. It would be quite useful to know the extent, content and delivery of informal or implicit ethics education as it is currently being incorporated into other areas of coursework in psychology graduate programs. Moreover, courses in research ethics were not included in the current study, however, research is a key issue in

psychology ethics and further information regarding education of this area would be valuable. Although the importance of ethical considerations in training programs has clearly been recognized, there remains neither consensus nor specification as to what are considered the best practices in ethics education. The current research around the most effective methods of teaching ethics is an exciting and a vital component of ethics research, therefore further research in this area is warranted as well.

Conclusions

The results of this study are encouraging given that all the programs offer formal coursework in ethics and for almost all of these programs a course in ethics is mandatory. This is a dramatic shift from Pettifor and Pitcher's (1982) review of ethics training that revealed that only 56% of programs offered an ethics course and only 7.4% programs required an ethics course. The substantial increase in ethics training says a lot about the profession's commitment to training ethical practitioners. On the other hand, there remain many unanswered questions. In terms of this study, the findings around course content raise some questions. For example, discussions around Ethical Principles and Values were the most commonly cited topic, however, this topic was only cited in 82.73% of syllabi. Does this finding mean that 17.27% of courses do not discuss the CPA or APA code of ethics or is this reflective of incomplete information on the syllabus? Moreover, is it true that just over half of courses cover the topic of Informed Consent? I believe that it is unlikely that these fundamental topics are not addressed at some point in all courses and are probably due to missing information on the syllabi, but I lack the evidence to support this opinion. On the other hand, if these topics are not mentioned as areas of discussion in a syllabus and are, in fact, covered, then to what depth are these topics

being discussed in class? Completeness of syllabi is an ethical issue in and of itself. If we are to look at syllabi as contractual documents between instructors, students and the universities, that are intended to inform students about course content, then this discrepancy may be worth examining in greater detail in future research.

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Appendix A

Sample Format for a Psychology Ethics Course

In an effort to provide some practical use for the current data, an outline for a typical course in ethics that integrates the findings of this study is provided. It was interesting to observe that with all of the various topics covered in the courses examined in this study, 11 general topic categories were identified (i.e. 10 foundational concepts and then the broad area of special topics and practice areas) and there are on average 11 weeks of instruction in a semester. Thus, if an instructor wanted to use the results of this study to organize a course in psychology ethics it may look like the following:

Student-Based Course Objectives:

1. Students will be able to gain familiarity with various codes, standards, laws and professional associations
2. Students will be able to increase their understanding of ethics and their ability to identify potential ethical quandaries
3. Students will be able to develop knowledge and skills in ethical decision-making
4. Students will be able to increase awareness around psychologists' professional identity and responsibilities
5. Students will be able to increase self-knowledge, which will assist them in monitoring, maintaining and enchaining their competence and non-discriminatory practice.
6. Students will be able increase their cross-cultural knowledge and understanding for non-discriminatory practice.

Class Format:

Classes will be a mix of lecture and class discussion. Students will be partially responsible for instructing the class on a selected topic. We will use vignettes and case studies to highlight ethical dilemmas and to practice using the CPA Companion Manual's Ethical Decision-Making model. Guest speakers may join our class to discuss a particular topic and/or their own experiences with ethical issues in clinical work.

Topics of Study:

- Ethical principles & values
- Law, legal issues & expert testimony
- Confidentiality, privacy & record keeping
- Professional boundaries
- Regulation & registration
- Ethical decision-making
- Informed consent
- Competence
- Diversity and multicultural issues
- Research

Instructors may choose to include some of the 11 special topics and practice areas in remaining lectures, or may choose to have students learn about these special topics through assignments/papers, presentations or assignments.

- Psychotherapy & empirically support
- Social justice & responsibility
- Business & managed care
- Idiosyncratic topics
- Professional context
- Academia & teaching
- Working with families women & children
- Assessment

- Supervision
- Technology & internet
- Prescription privileges

Evaluation:

Students' final grade will be based upon participation, a term paper, student-led instruction such as a presentation, a short written assignment and an exam.